

BARGAINING UPDATE



CHANTELLE MANAGEMENT - EDITH CAVELL CARE CENTRE LOCAL 048 CHAPTER 011 - ALL STAFF

Edith Cavell employer continues to delay progress in bargaining

Members need to stay united and show support for negotiating team

It has been more than a year since your negotiating team last met with the employer in an attempt to bargain a new collective agreement.

The lack of progress since then is largely due to the employer dragging its feet in a deliberate attempt to delay progress.

After talks reached an impasse in July 2021, we began the process of negotiating an Essential Services Agreement (ESA). It's a legal requirement in Alberta for this to be in place before negotiations can call on the help of Section 65 formal mediation.

The ESA lists those services that in a time of strike or lockout are needed to protect the life, personal safety or health of the public, or necessary to the maintenance and administration of the rule of law or public security. The ESA determines which services are essential services and must continue during a strike or lockout.

However, rather than work with AUPE to negotiate an ESA, the employer has shown little interest in talking to us. It is more interested in causing longer delays in an

attempt to undermine members and the bargaining process.

How did we get here?

After the last bargaining meeting on July 13, 2021, it was clear that talks had reached an impasse. Two days later, without the courtesy of informing the union, the employer applied for informal mediation.

This approach is not normal. Failing to let the other side know you are about to file for informal mediation shows the disrespect this company has for you as workers and for the idea of jointly bargaining an agreement that works for everyone.

We met with the employer to work on the ESA on Feb. 23, 2022. Rather than talking seriously about what is required for an ESA at Edith Cavell Care Centre, the employer simply wanted to copy and paste an ESA from another Chantelle supportive living care facility. Like trying to make an 'apple' into an 'orange.' Beyond that, it was not prepared to talk or consult.

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What was in the employer's last offer?

More rollbacks. Your employer wants to make your work harder and less rewarding.

Here are some of the employer's demands:

Cut health benefits: The employer wants to pay 75 per cent of your health-benefits premiums instead of the current 100 per cent. That would mean more money coming out of your pockets every pay cheque.

Cut eligibility for health benefits: For part-time workers, the employer wants health benefits only for those who work 21 regularly scheduled hours per week. Currently, you have to work 14.5 hours to qualify. This means fewer part-time workers will get benefits, particularly if the employer deliberately looks to reduce the hours part-timers are scheduled.

Cut flexible health benefit spending account: The employer wants to cut your flexible account to \$550 from \$650. Again, this means less money in your pocket. The Alberta Health Services (AHS) - ANC (nursing care) provincial collective agreement amount remains at \$1,100 per year.

Cut holiday pay: The employer wants to calculate holiday pay based on the number of hours worked in the preceding four weeks. In other words, if you do not work in that four-week period, you will get no holiday pay. If you have worked only a few shifts in that period, you will get much less holiday pay than you used to get.

Cut pension-plan contributions: Currently, you have the option of contributing 1%, 2%, 3%, 4% or 4.5% of your regular earnings to a pension plan. They want to remove the 4.5% option. While this may not sound big, over the length of your career, it can make a big difference to your retirement income.

What wage increases is the employer offering?

On July 13, 2021, your employer had proposed the following wage increases.

For nursing staff:

- 2020-2021: 0%.
- 2021-2022: "Me-too" raise to match what AHS agreed with its nursing care staff.
Since then, AHS nursing care workers have accepted:
 - 1% lump sum pandemic payment for 2021 & effective Oct 1, 2021, a 1% wage grid increase (retroactive).
 - Sept. 1, 2022: 1.25% wage grid increase.
 - April 1, 2023: 2% wage grid increase & 2% long service increment for employees with 20 or more years of service.
- 2022-2023: No proposal was made.

For support staff:

- 2020-2021: 0%.
- 2021-2022: 0%.
- 2022-2023: "Me-too" raise to match what AHS agreed with its support staff.

AHS support staff have a tentative agreement but have not yet voted. This tentative agreement gives 1% lump sum payment for all hours worked in 2021 plus 1.25% on Sept. 1, 2022, and 2% on April 1, 2023, and an additional \$1,400 lump sum pro-rated.

The employer's last proposal is worse than other settlements we have seen in health care, including at AHS, which gave more raises and added some lump-sum payments.

What happens next?

We will continue to push for an ESA, so we can then proceed to informal mediation.

In the meantime, we need all members to continue to support the negotiating team and to show the employer that despite its efforts, we are still united and still determined to get a fair deal.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact a member of the negotiating team.